

ARMY GROUND RISK-MANAGEMENT PUBLICATION

COUNTERMEASURE

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Celebrate The Holidays With Risk-Management

Encouraging others to have a safe holiday season could be the best gift you can give this year. Take it upon yourself to be the designated driver at this year's Christmas or New Year's Eve party and possibly change lives forever. What a gift! The gift of a safe and responsible holiday season!

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COUNTERMEASURE

The Official Safety Magazine for
Army Ground Risk-Management

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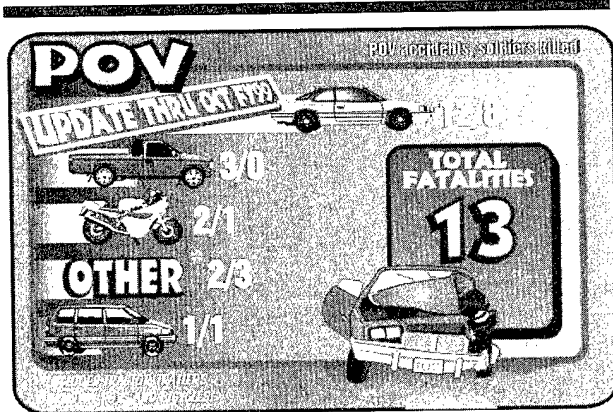
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Charles M. Burke
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
Commanding Officer

From the Editor

Brrrrrr! Winter weather is here! In some areas, we are facing some of the worst weather of the year. Every winter, soldiers are hurt on- and off-duty in accidents attributed to weather conditions, complacency, and poor judgment. It's also the time of year when our thoughts turn to the holiday season and associated outdoor activities, including hunting and skiing.

Historical evidence indicates that we can expect an increase in accidents, injuries, and deaths during the winter. Statistics show the majority of these will occur during off-duty hours with most fatalities resulting from traffic accidents. These deaths and injuries do not have to occur!

Risk management can easily be practiced during winter weather. We must think about the consequences of all our actions and weigh the results of our decisions. There are few things worth risking a life for. Accidents result in pain and suffering for the victim, not to mention the mental anguish the person's family suffers. Take the few minutes necessary to make good decisions.

Prevention can be as simple as individual awareness. Know your limits. Plan your activities accordingly and follow the safety rules: winterize your car, drive defensively, wear your seatbelt, wear your helmet if riding a motorcycle, don't speed, and don't drink and drive—each is a small price to pay to stay alive.

Remember, don't take unnecessary risks—we are ultimately responsible for not only our personal safety, but the safety of our loved ones. Only common sense, self-discipline, and good judgment can ensure an enjoyable and safe winter.

On behalf of the Countermeasure staff and the U.S. Army Safety Center, best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season.

Safety First!

Paula Allman

Winter Driving Tips For The Holiday Season

The holiday season, with its intense activities, fosters accidents. Fatigue, inattention, speeding, and drinking and driving will take a toll because holidays are prime time for travel. The sad thing is, most traffic accidents are preventable. Normal safe driving habits should be modified to allow for these changing conditions. To reduce the risk of being involved in an accident, leaders should remind their soldiers of the following before allowing them to leave for a long weekend or other holiday period.

- Always buckle up.
- Make sure soldiers get plenty of rest and stay alert behind the wheel. When fatigue sets in, STOP and rest.
- Adjust speed for road and weather conditions.
- Don't drive impaired, whether from alcohol, drugs, or fatigue.
- When riding a motorcycle, wear personal protective equipment and follow the rules of the road.
- Pay attention to traffic conditions—never assume the right of way. Practice driving courtesy, even when others don't.
- Look ahead and leave an escape path. Be aware of your following distance at all times. Increase it accordingly as weather, traffic, and lighting dictate.
- Keep headlights on low beam when driving in fog, sleet or heavy snow, even in the daytime.
- Drive according to the conditions. Sudden lane changes or sharp turns can put you into a spin quickly on snow, sleet, and ice.
- When faced with an emergency, don't panic—remain calm.
- Don't apply brakes suddenly in case of a flat tire or blowout. Keep a tight grip on the steering wheel and resist the pull on the wheel from the flat tire. Slow down gradually, then ease off the roadway before stopping.
- **Most importantly, drive defensively.** Pay attention to your driving and possible actions of other drivers; anticipate what they could do wrong and plan what actions you might need to take to avoid involvement.

The most common mistakes drivers make in bad weather are driving too fast for conditions and underestimating stopping distances. The

best advice for driving in winter is to SLOW DOWN! Concentrate on safe, cautious driving.

Winterizing Your Car

Cold weather conditions also put a strain on vehicles. A few inexpensive preventive measures can make sure your car will perform well in winter weather.

■ **Winterize your car.** Get it done now. Check your radiator and hoses for leaks and cracks. Make sure your water pump and thermostat work properly. Add a sufficient amount of antifreeze for the coldest weather (at least -30°F). Be sure your heater and defroster are operating properly.

■ **Check your battery.** Batteries lose power as the temperature drops, so get a charge or get a new battery.

■ **Make sure your tires are properly inflated and in good condition.** Snow tires are recommended, but chains can provide the best starting and stopping performances in severe snow and ice. If you use chains, they should be used on all four wheels.

■ **Check your brakes.** Avoid slamming on the brakes. The way to stop while reducing the chance of skidding is to ease up on the gas and let engine compression brake the vehicle, using the brakes only when the vehicle has decelerated to a slow speed. Use an even, quick pumping action for rear-wheel drive and slow, steady pressure for front-wheel drive. In case of a skid, turn the front wheels in the direction of the skid. **NOTE:** Antilock brake systems (ABS) require a different action by the driver: Read your owner's manual for further instructions.

■ **Check your windshield area.** Wipers should have adequate arm tension and worn blades should be replaced. Make sure every glass surface is clear of snow and ice, and your visibility is good before you drive.

■ **Have your muffler and exhaust system checked by a mechanic.** Carbon monoxide kills!

Arrive alive in '99!

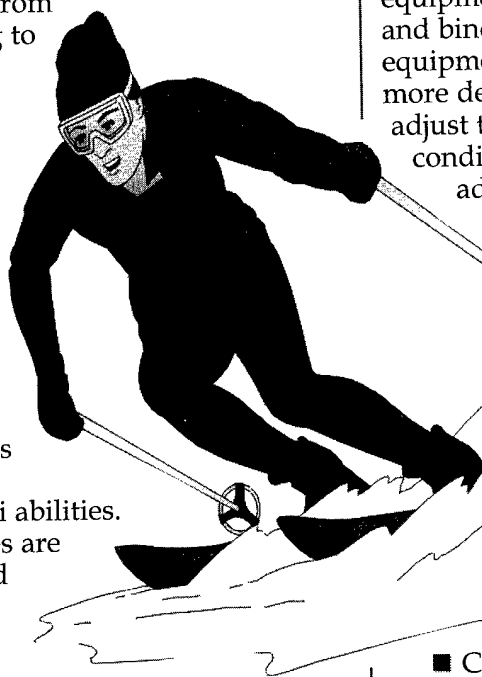
POC: Al Brown, Traffic Safety Office, USASC, DSN 558-2046 (334-255-2046), brownj@safety-emh1.army.mil

Ski Safely Down The Mountain

Anyone can reach the top of a slope. It's getting down safely that can get tricky. According to the National Injury Information Clearinghouse, more than 40,000 skiers were treated in emergency rooms for injuries in one year alone. These skiers ranged in age from the very young to age 64.

Skiing is a demanding sport; skiers should be physically fit and properly conditioned before attempting to sail down the slopes. In addition, skiers should —

- Not over-ski abilities. Most ski slopes are clearly marked according to difficulty.
- Always seek basic instruction before attempting any form of skiing.
- Use properly fitted, adjusted, and maintained equipment. If renting,



ensure the shop is reliable.

- Watch for obstructions and other skiers.
- Be alert to changing weather conditions.

Cross-country skiing provides skiers a different type of challenge. The equipment doesn't provide the rigid boot and binding support of downhill-style equipment. Skiers should work up to more demanding slopes gradually and adjust their pace to their own level of conditioning, not someone else's. In addition, cross-country skiers should —

- Prepare for extended outings.

■ Plan route ahead of time and let someone know both the route and planned time of return.

- Check for avalanche warnings.

■ Carry extra food, water, clothing, and an emergency survival kit with an avalanche-warning beacon.

- Always travel with a companion; use the buddy system. ♦

Skiers Need Protection From Cold

Because skiing takes place in cold climates, protection from the elements is extremely important. Skiers should pay particular attention to clothing and boots and observe the following:

- Dress in several layers of clothing; warm air trapped between layers provides lasting insulation.
- Protect cheeks, ears, and nose.
- Wear polarized sunglasses to prevent snow blindness.
- Boots should fit snugly enough to prevent heel lift or sideways movement, but not so tight that circulation is cut off.
- Know the signs, symptoms, and first-aid for cold-weather injuries.

Cold-Weather Injuries

Everything becomes more difficult under cold weather conditions. Tasks take longer and require more effort. Liquids freeze. Metal becomes brittle. And a leader's job of protecting soldiers gets tougher. Leaders must watch for early signs of cold stress in their soldiers. The most dangerous threats are shown in the chart below.

Cold-Weather Injuries

Frostbite

| Cause | Symptoms | First Aid |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freezing of tissue, normally due to exposure below 32°F. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbness in affected area. Tingling, blistered, swollen, or tender areas. Pale, yellowish, waxy-looking skin (grayish in dark-skinned soldiers). Frozen tissue that feels wooden to the touch. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm affected area with direct body heat. Consult medical personnel as soon as possible. Do not thaw frozen areas if treatment will be delayed. Do not massage or rub affected areas. Do not wet the area or rub it with snow or ice. Do not expose affected area to open fire, stove, or any other intense heat source. |

Chilblain

| Cause | Symptoms | First Aid |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated exposure of bare skin for prolonged periods to temperatures from 20° to 60°F (for those not acclimated to cold weather). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swollen red skin (or darkening of the skin in dark-skinned soldiers). Tender, hot skin, usually accompanied by itching. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm affected area with direct body heat. Do not massage or rub affected areas. Do not wet the area or rub it with snow or ice. Do not expose affected area to open fire, stove, or any other intense heat source. |

Immersion foot (trench foot)

| Cause | Symptoms | First Aid |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prolonged exposure of feet to wet conditions at temperatures between 32° and 60° F. Inactivity and damp socks and boots (or tightly laced boots that impair circulation) speed onset and severity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cold, numb feet may progress to hot with shooting pains. Swelling, redness, and bleeding. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rewarm feet by exposing them to warm air. Evacuate victim to a medical facility. Do not massage, rub, moisten, or expose affected area to extreme heat. |

Dehydration

| Cause | Symptoms | First Aid |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depletion of body fluids. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dizziness Weakness Blurred vision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace lost water. Water should be sipped, not gulped. Get medical treatment. |

Hypothermia

| Cause | Symptoms | First Aid |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prolonged cold exposure and body-heat loss. May occur at temperatures well above freezing, especially when a person is immersed in water. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of shivering. Drowsiness, mental slowness, lack of coordination. Can progress to unconsciousness, irregular heartbeat, and death. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strip off wet clothing and wrap victim in blankets or a sleeping bag. Place another person in sleeping bag as an additional heat source. Get victim to a heated location and medical treatment as soon as possible. |

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Don't Go Hunting For Trouble

Hunting with a rifle or shotgun is a dangerous sport under any circumstances, but it can be downright deadly for humans when hunters are not well trained or properly prepared. The Hunter Education Association recorded 137 fatal and 1,376 nonfatal hunting accidents this past year.

If you are among the millions of Americans who take to the fields with a loaded weapon, keep these things in mind.

Before you pick up a gun...

Begin your hunting experience by taking a firearms safety course available in your area. In some states, they are required before you can obtain a license. These courses can be valuable whether you are a novice or an experienced hunter.

Firearm basics

- Keep firearms unloaded and keep the action open until you are hunting. Carry guns in their cases to the shooting area. This is the law in most states.
- Always assume every firearm is loaded and dangerous. Respect it for the harm it can inflict.
- Never take someone else's word that a firearm is not loaded. Always check for

yourself.

■ Never engage in horseplay with a firearm. Guns are deadly business and should be treated with a serious, cautious manner.

■ Always point the muzzle in a "safe" direction. A safe direction is one in which, if fired accidentally, a weapon will not cause injury or damage. Never point a gun at anything you don't intend to shoot.

■ Be sure the barrel and mechanisms are clear of obstructions. This is best done by looking down from the breech end of the weapon.

■ Be sure you use the proper ammunition for the weapon you are using, and know the maximum range of your ammunition.

In the hunting area

When carrying a gun, follow these simple rules:

- Keep the muzzle under control and pointed away from yourself and others.
- Be certain the safety is "on."
- Keep your fingers outside the trigger guard.

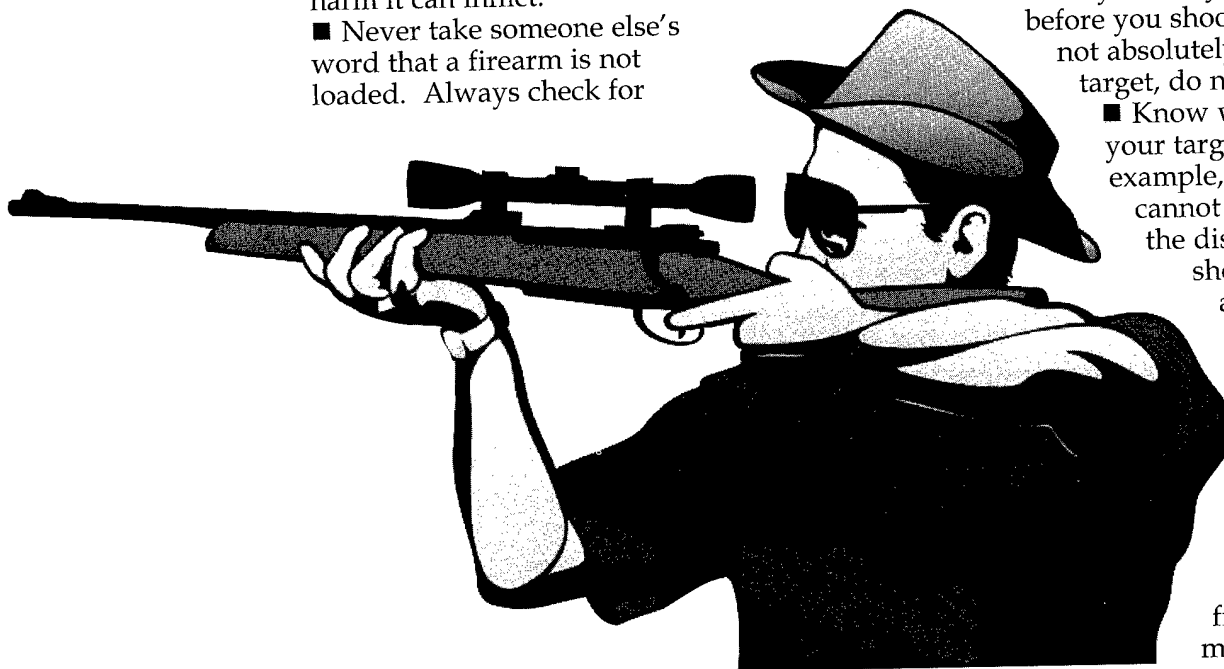
■ Clearly identify your target before you shoot. If you are not absolutely sure of your target, do not shoot.

■ Know what's beyond your target. For example, because you cannot see what's in the distance, don't shoot at an animal

standing on the horizon of a hill.

■ Never shoot at a sound or a patch of color.

■ When a shell does not fire, keep the muzzle pointed



in a safe direction for at least 45 seconds and then remove the cartridge.

■ Don't climb fences or trees, cross slippery areas, or jump ditches or creeks while carrying a loaded gun. Unload the firearm first. It takes only a few seconds, and it could save someone's life. If you are hunting with a partner, hand your gun to him before crossing the obstacle.

■ Never pull a firearm toward you by the muzzle.

■ Handguns should be carried in a holster.

■ Do not shoot at flat, hard surfaces or at water. Bullets will ricochet off these surfaces out of control. Remember, a bullet or shotgun shell is your responsibility from the instant it leaves

your gun.

■ Always shout to alert other hunters of your presence as they approach you. Never assume you are the only hunter in an area.

■ Be especially careful at the end of the day as you become tired and the firearm you are carrying becomes heavier. This fatigue can make you careless. If you feel tired – stop, unload your weapon, and rest.

■ Do not use alcohol, drugs, or medication which may impair your judgment and dull your senses.

■ Never pick up unexploded ordnance.

■ Follow established policies and procedures on military installations. ♦

—Adapted from Safety Times

Tree-Stand Safety Tips

Tree-stands can be a valuable tool for hunters, but only if they are used correctly and safely. Nationally, one in three hunting injuries involves tree-stands. Most of these incidents could have been prevented if the user of the tree-stand had followed these safety precautions.

■ Be sure to conduct pre-season and daily inspections of your tree-stand and related equipment before using it, especially those items that are removable.

— Paint removable bolts and wing-nuts a bright color, so if you drop them, you will be able to find them easily at the tree base.

— Carry spare bolts and connectors. The strength of the "biting end" of your tree-stand depends on all the hardware being present.

■ Always use a safety belt when hunting from tree-stands. They are best used when climbing up or down a tree. Safety belts should be the first and last things used.

Editor's note: Although wearing a safety belt does not eliminate the possibility of being involved in a tree-stand accident, it should minimize the potential for serious injury.

■ Never use a rope to replace a safety belt.

■ Never climb up or down a tree with a gun or bow.

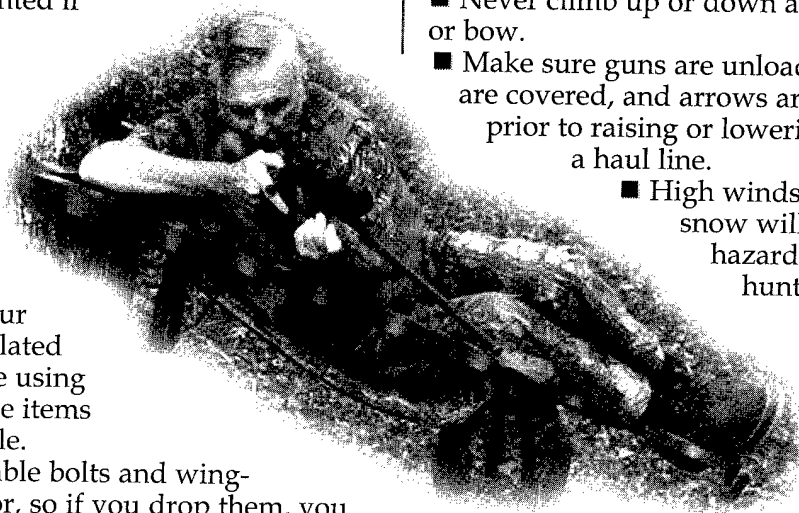
■ Make sure guns are unloaded, broadheads are covered, and arrows are not notched prior to raising or lowering weapons with a haul line.

■ High winds, rain, sleet and snow will increase the hazards of tree-stand hunting. A slippery platform will reduce the climber's ability to "bite" the tree while climbing or descending.

■ Always let someone know where you plan to hunt and when you will return.

Be a responsible sportsman. Use good judgment and exercise all safety precautions. ♦

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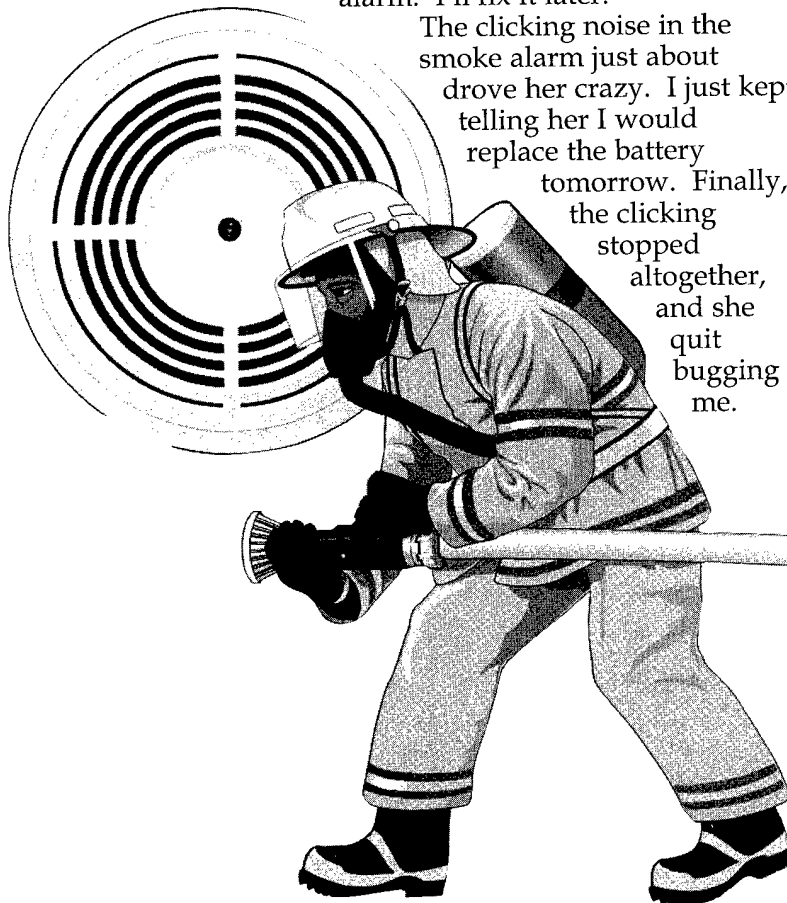


The World's Greatest Procrastinator

Prior to becoming a safety professional, I could put off until tomorrow what I should have done today with the best of them. I considered myself the world's greatest procrastinator—I enjoyed being that way. My wife often made comments to the effect that I was a little lazy, but I didn't listen to her.

I remember one day in particular when my procrastination created quite a bit of excitement in the neighborhood. It was a warm summer evening in early July. Hold on a minute—this episode really began about 3 weeks earlier. We came home from shopping for our newborn son. As we entered the house, my wife said, "What is that sound coming from the kitchen?" I said, "It sounds like the battery alert in the smoke alarm. I'll fix it later."

The clicking noise in the smoke alarm just about drove her crazy. I just kept telling her I would replace the battery tomorrow. Finally, the clicking stopped altogether, and she quit bugging me.



About a week later, the power went out while she was frying chicken on the range, and she forgot to remove the pan. It was Sunday, and I was busy reading my paper in the living room. She gave up trying to get me to check the fuse box and went to the bedroom to check on the baby. About 15 minutes later, the power came back on. Of course, I knew it would.

I finished reading the newspaper and decided to watch a ballgame on TV. Shortly thereafter, my wife came racing into the living room, carrying the baby and screaming, "Where is that smoke coming from?"

This time there was no procrastination. I jumped off the couch and observed a wall of heavy smoke against the ceiling. I realized it was coming from the kitchen. I told her to take the baby next door and call the fire department. She did, and I headed for the kitchen, grabbing the fire extinguisher I had thankfully mounted in the entryway after much procrastination.

I extinguished the fire on the stove and in the overhead cabinets. The fire department arrived and confirmed the fire was out. Their subsequent investigation revealed (you guessed it) that the grease in the frying pan caught fire, and because the batteries were dead, the smoke alarm did not function. I will never forget the lecture the fire chief gave me. Some of his words are not printable. By the way, this procrastination episode cost \$4,000 which could have been avoided by installing a \$1.50 battery.

Do you procrastinate? I guess we all do at times. However, we must all remember to be very careful about what we choose to procrastinate about. Take this from one who knows: I used to be the world's greatest, but I'll gladly pass the title on to you. ♦

—Adapted from *Road & Rec*

Don't Be A Pour Host

For many, free-flowing spirits will mar the holiday spirit of peace and goodwill. Under the influence of holiday merriment, some soldiers will drive home after partying without fully considering the possible consequences. Their impairment by the spirits of the season will cause a season of misery for the families of their victims.

But drunk driving accidents don't have to happen. Leaders can pass along the real holiday spirit by briefing their soldiers on the following:

Soldiers should make driving arrangements before going to a party. Prior planning will keep the holiday season safe as well as festive. Options include designated drivers (who won't be drinking that night), taxis or other public transportation, or "safe ride" programs.

Soldiers hosting parties should be responsible hosts. Since it's easier for

guests to get drunk than it is for them to get sober, a good host will also serve plenty of nonalcoholic beverages.

Hosts should plan to accommodate heavy drinkers overnight rather than sending them out to drive themselves home. Hosts can also offer safe alternatives to driving, such as calling a cab or "safe ride."

Hosts should remember not to urge their guests to "drink up." In some states, hosts can be held liable if they allow a drunken guest to drive away, and that guest then has an accident.

Hosts should also provide plenty of snacks. While a full stomach won't negate the effects of alcohol, it may delay them. Further, some guests won't drink as much if they have something to nibble on.

Soldiers with teens should also be advised to encourage them to avoid drinking and driving situations. ♦

I'll Be There!

It was two o'clock in the morning as I was snatched rudely from my slumber by the ringing of the telephone. Who in the world would be calling at this hour? Then a drunken, slurring voice came over the line, "Can you come get me? I'm drunk as hell."

The drive across town wasn't very exciting—until an intoxicated pedestrian staggered out in front of me and a drunk driver kept weaving into my lane most of the way. However, I finally got to you and your friends.

I was really upset when one of your friends burned a hole in the backseat of my car while trying to hang his head out of the window to throw up. And then you had the nerve to ask if we could all go to breakfast! There you were, stinking up the front seat with your beer breath and yelling out the

window at the "babes" in a Corvette at a stoplight.

No, this definitely wasn't a lot of fun, but you are my friend and losing sleep to come get you was a small sacrifice compared to what could have happened to you. You were not in a ditch somewhere or wrapped around a tree, bleeding, or maybe dead—you were right there beside me, drunk and obnoxious. . .but you were alive.

As I grabbed your shoulder and pulled your face away from the Vette and back into the car, I smiled to myself. Even in your drunken stupor, you had the sense to know I'd come. I smiled because I knew you'd do the same for me.

Editor's note: Remember there is no shame in having a friend care for you as a designated driver. It is the responsible and smart thing to do. ♦

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"Think!" – *August*

Road March

Heat Stress During High-Intensity Training – *October*

Safety Messages

AN/UXC-7 and PP-6224 Cable Hazards – *January*

BB-490/U and BB-390/A Batteries – *January*

BA-5800/U Lithium Sulfur Dioxide Batteries – *January*

BA-5590/U Lithium Sulfur Dioxide Batteries (SAFT) – *May*

D-1 Refueling Nozzles – *May*

Crane, Warehouse 10K, Deadlined – *May*

Crane, Warehouse 10K, Off Deadline – *September*

FMTV Defective Driveline U-Joint Driveshafts – *September*

Generator Set, Diesel, 2KW (Mechron) – *January*

Generator Set, Diesel, 2KW (Mechron) – *May*

HMT Deadlined – *September*

LMTV/MTV Defective Trailer Air Brake Supply Valve – *September*

Lithium Batteries – *October*

Load Moment Indicators on Cranes – *January*

M1A1 and M1A2 Air Induction System

Maintenance – *January*

M1A1 and M1A2 NBC Tube Assembly – *May*

M1A2 Fire Control System Test – *May*

M1A2 Hull Electronics Unit – *May*

M1A2 Slave Start Procedures – *May*

M1A2 Turret Remote Switching Module – *May*

M1076 Palletized Load System Trailer

Drawbar – *May*

M34 Blasting Machine Deadlined – *September*

M915/M916/M920/M911 Fifth-Wheel Towing Devices – *January*

M939 Maximum Safe Operating Speeds – *September*

MLRS Cab Hinge Stud, Lock Nut, and Hold-Down Washer Nut Installation – *January*

NDI Large Tug Vessel – *September*

Retread Non-Directional Cross-Country Bias-Ply

Tire – *September*

ST-138/PRC25 Electrical Equipment Harness – *May*

Safety Performance

FY97 Safety Record Best Ever! – *January*

Sleep Plan

Safe Sleeping Areas – *April*

Sports Injuries

Ski Safely Down The Mountain – *December*

Sports Injury Prevention – *June*

Standards

A Matter Of Fact – Train Drivers to Standard – *April*

Shortcut Costly – *April*

Training To Standard Is Key Link In Saving Lives – *April*

Suicide

Are You Feeling Stressed? – *March*

Chief of Staff, Army, States Concerns – *March*

Suicide Warning Signs Poster – *March*

Tracked Vehicles

A Matter of Fact – Train Drivers To Standard – *April*

Dangerously Comfortable – *October*

Inexperience Kills! (M577) – *April*

Shortcut Costly (M981) – *April*

Stop! Dismount Your Ground Guides, Soldier! – *September*

Tree Crushes Ground Guide – *June*

Traffic Safety

Road Bullies – *July*

Training

A Matter of Fact – Train Drivers To Standard – *April*

Inexperience Kills! – *April*

Readiness – *June*

Training To Standard Is Key Link In Saving Lives – *April*

Video

New POV Video Is Here – *September*

Who's Driving? (Video Poster) – *November*

Water Safety

Boat Smart From The Start – *May*

Safe Swimming – *May*

Wheeled Vehicles

A Matter of Fact – Train Drivers To Standard – *April*

Accident Investigations: How Detailed Should They Be? – *August*

How Important Is A Fire Extinguisher? – *September*

It Wasn't All The Driver's Fault – *September*

Stop! Dismount Your Ground Guides, Soldier! – *September* ♦